

Where Are Cereals Grown.

What are at present our chief grain-producing States and what change has taken place in this respect within the past few years? Some data in regard to the production and distribution of cereals, as well as the capacity of different sections for advance in this direction have lately been published by the Bureau of Statistics.

It appears that the total product of cereals in the United States increased in ten years from 1,450,000,000 bushels in 1868 to 2,178,000,000 in 1877, and 2,302,000,000 in 1878. Of the whole national supply, only three per cent. was exported in 1868, ten per cent. in 1878, while in the twelvemonth ending June 30, 1879, the shipment reached the unprecedented figure of 246,000,000 bushels, or nearly eleven per cent. of the entire yield. The relative proportion of each crop retained for consumption is, in the case of corn 93 1/2 per cent., of barley 88 per cent., of rye 80 per cent., of wheat 75 per cent., of oats 99 per cent., while of buckwheat the whole amount produced is used at home. As to barley, we observe that, although less than ten per cent. is sent out of the country, nearly all of it is moved from places of its growth, and about one-third from the States in which it is produced. Corn is necessarily consumed mainly in the neighborhood of its production, and a survey of these statistics shows that, though maize is grown in every part of the country and constitutes five-eighths of the whole cereal harvest, less than a fourth of the States have a corn supply exceeding their requirements. Nearly all the available surplus is found in a single group, the river States of the West—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri. The so-called lake States—Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota—have barely enough corn for home consumption, which is less per capita by a fourth than the average of the United States. Their comparative deficiency in this cereal is best seen in the number of swine returned, which varies as 40 to 116 reported for the corn belt. The proportion of cattle, too, in the same sections was as 65 to 87. The immense preponderance of corn growing in the seven central States of the great valley is attested by the product of sixty-two bushels per head—this, too, in a region less exclusively agricultural and more conspicuous for manufactures than any other section of the West or South.

The seat of corn production was, we need not say, formerly in the South. As late as 1859, fifteen slave States produced 55 per cent. of the whole crop. In the year 1860, the corn-growing States were ranked as follows: Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee; but ten years later Iowa had dislodged Ohio from the second place. In 1878 Illinois and Iowa retained the first and second rank; Missouri and Kansas both passed Ohio, and then followed the other States mentioned in the same order as in 1860. The crop of all the Southern States was only 10,000,000 bushels larger in 1877 than in the year before the war, whereas that of the other States has risen in the same period from 400,000,000 to 900,000,000 bushels. The center of production has moved, however, more rapidly westward than northward. Amid all these changes the relative yield of the central belt between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi River has declined by very slow degrees, and will continue for a time to recede slowly, until the lands of the Missouri Valley are more fully occupied. Already, however, the proportion of the corn crop grown in the trans-Mississippi zone reaches nearly forty per cent. It is also clear from the latest statistics that the increase of cattle feeding in Indiana and Illinois threatens to detract to the country west of the Mississippi the business of shipping corn in grain. Thus the most bulky form in which this cereal can be exported is that in which it is tending to be sent the greatest distances to market—apparently a violation of the plainest principle of economy. Of course the anomaly arises from the necessities of primitive agriculture, which lacks capital to buy the requisite animals for the condensation and conversion of grain.

Of our wheat crop the Atlantic coast now produces only seventeen per cent., against thirty per cent. in the year before the war. The central belt has fallen in the same period from fifty-four per cent. to forty per cent., while the trans-Mississippi region has risen from fourteen per cent. to forty-two per cent. The surplus is now produced only in five States lying between the Ohio River and the lakes, and in Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, California and Oregon. The portions of our own country requiring part of this surplus comprise New England, the Middle States and the Cotton States. New England produces only three-tenths of a bushel for each inhabitant; the Middle States grow three and one-third bushels, or a little more than half the quantity necessary for a full supply; the Southern, Atlantic and Gulf States almost as much, while Kentucky and Tennessee, with nearly six bushels are self-supporting. Of course the requirement of wheat is not the same per capita in all sections. In the South there is a large quantity of corn used, by whites as well as negroes, and taking the twelve States from Maryland to Texas together, four bushels per head is deemed the mean amount consumed.

While the westward progress of corn production has of late been very slow, the tendency of the wheat center to move westward is still active, and may continue so for many years, as wheat culture subdues the high plateaus and mountain valleys between the Missouri and the Pacific Ocean. We must bear in mind that wheat can be grown from 2,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of maize culture. For Washington Territory, for instance, from which maize growing is virtually excluded, competent observers predict a yield of wheat, in the near future, three times as large as the present supply of California. Of Dakota, it is affirmed, on trustworthy authority, that the area especially adapted to wheat growing does not fall short of 40,000,000 acres. A considerable part of Wyoming and Idaho can be turned to account in the same direction, and even Montana, though better suited to grazing purposes, was computed by Professor Thomas, of the Hayden expedition, to contain nearly 8,000,000 acres on which wheat could be raised. Counting but one-tenth of the intermontane region, which includes two States and six Territories, with four-tenths of the area of the Pacific slope on the west and of Dakota on the east, we have upward of 160,000,000 acres of land from much of which the growth of maize will always be debarred, but in which wheat farming will ultimately exist as a specialty, dominating, for a time, all other arable culture.

With such opportunities of expansion it is plain that our wheat area cannot fail to supply any deficiency in the world's production for many generations, without stinting the requirements of our rapidly increasing population.—N. Y. Sun.

Rotation of Crops.

The fact has long been known that it is not best to grow the same kind of crop on the same land for a number of years in succession. Thus, the yield of corn, wheat, oats, tobacco or other crop, if grown on the same land without change will gradually diminish, while if these crops be made to alternate, that is, first one then another, the aggregate product will be much greater. This change is called rotation of crops. The advantages of rotation, or change of crops, result from the following considerations: In the first place, different crops require elements in different proportions; one requires more potash than another, or lime, or phosphoric acid, or nitrogeen, or some other constituent. Potatoes require more potash than wheat or corn, while these require more phosphoric acid; clover and tobacco need a great deal of lime, and so with other crops. A number of crops of potatoes in succession, without the addition of potash in some form, will use up the available supply, unless the quantity be very large. Before this comes to pass another crop that requires less of potash but more of some other element might grow well, while the potatoes would not flourish.

In the second place, rotation of crops gives time for the disintegrating action of the atmosphere, rain and frost to prepare new material from the rock-particles in the soil and get it in a form to be used by the plant. One crop may use up available food of a particular kind faster than it can be prepared by these natural agencies. In the third place, rotation, or change of crop, when properly managed, enables one plant to prepare food for another. Thus clover sends a long tap-root deep down into the soil, and brings up food to the surface. When the roots decay, the wheat-plant that has surface roots mainly can use the food prepared by the clover. In the fourth place different crops require different modes of cultivation, so that the physical properties of the soil are improved by rotation. Grass lands in a few years become hard and require to be loosened up, which can be done by the cultivation of a crop of corn, followed by one of wheat and the re-sowing of grass.

Not only is a change of crops desirable but an occasional change of seed is found to be of great benefit. Wheat grown on stiff clay lands for some years will be improved by getting seed from that grown on sandy soil, and that on sandy soil by obtaining seed from wheat grown on stiff clay. An occasional change of seed from one latitude to another is also found to be beneficial. Crops that require the same elements in about the same proportions should not follow each other, nor those that are similar in their mode of growth. Wheat and corn which depend mainly on surface-roots will do well after clover, cotton or tobacco, which have long tap-roots that extend down into the subsoil. The greater the difference in the constitution and character of two crops, the more likely are they suited to follow each other. Climate and soil have much to do in determining the best rotation.

A good rotation for three years is: First year, corn; second year, wheat; third year, clover. A good four years' rotation is to allow the clover to remain two years. In England where corn is not raised, a popular four years' rotation is: First year, turnips or other root crop; second year, barley; third year, clover; fourth year, wheat. A six years' rotation: Clover, wheat (two years), clover, corn, wheat. For the tobacco planter, a good rotation is: First and second year, clover; third year, tobacco; fourth year, wheat. This will keep the land fertile, or even improve it. For the cotton planter: First year, clover or peas; second year, cotton; third year, wheat.

In much of the cotton growing region in the South, cotton is grown year after year without change, to the great detriment of the land, except, perhaps, in river bottoms, where the soil is immensely rich and very deep. It is best in the above rotations not to remove the crop of clover, but let it lie on the ground and be turned under at the proper time.—Philadelphia Times.

Colonel Synges Dream.

A friend told me the other day that he met Colonel Synges at a club here, and that the latter remarked in a joking way that he was "sure the brigands would 'nab' him some day." Some time later the Colonel called on a lawyer here and expressed his intention of making his last will and testament, adding that perhaps the lawyer would think it a trifle foolish in him, a man still in his prime and in the flush of health to be concerned about such a matter. Naturally the gentleman of the bar professionally thought on the contrary no such thing; on the contrary, it was always well to be prepared, etc., etc. "Well," said the Colonel, "I will tell my reason, and I don't know that it will strike you as a good one. Last night I had a most vivid and distinct dream, in which my farm was attacked and I carried off by a mob. The impression on me was so strong that I have come here to get my affairs in order." The will was made, signed and completed, and Colonel Synges left for Salonia. Only a few months later the attack took place with which the whole world has been ringing.

This is rather a strong point in favor of the dream enthusiasts.—Constantinople Letter to Philadelphia Telegraph.

—Housekeepers, fresh fruit has come. Do away with pies and puddings.

How Americans Spend Their Summer Holiday.

Here is the summer holiday again. What shall we do with it? It is not more than a dozen years since the hard-worked New Yorker or Philadelphian with small income made up his mind that the summer holiday, which was an indulgence to his well-to-do neighbor, was a necessity for himself—as much of a necessity in the work of the year as the hours for sleep are in the work of the day. So far so good. Now that he is convinced of that he takes his holiday; but he is not yet used to it. He carries the luxury unceasingly; it discomforts him; he does not know how to use it. Having but the one chance to be idle in the year he is capricious about the idleness and scared lest he may not enjoy every moment of it.

He knows what he wants very well. He and his wife and children are talking about that at this very moment in a hundred thousand places. He will tell you that he is not hard to please. There are certain essentials, to be sure, which he must have when he leaves home for enjoyment; sublime scenery, pure air, no mosquitoes, plenty of game, milk, fruit and eggs, congenial society, spring mattresses, well-cooked meals and little to pay at the end of the week—give him these and he is satisfied. Where he shall go to find them and after he has gone how he was cheated while he was there afford him matter for grumbling from May until December.

Now his French or German cousin over the sea has a hundred holidays in the year. He knows how to bring the flavor out of every drop in the orange. He drifts into idleness easily, without a thought. When his fete comes he goes, for a few francs, with his sweetheart or wife, a mile or two out of town. They joke and laugh. The sun shines, the wind blows—it is all good. It rains, it is dusty—but they joke and laugh all the same. They criticize nothing. How good it all is!

But as for our American, a corn-husk bed, or a mosquito in the woods, will overturn a whole summer's airy fabric of happiness. In his anxiety lest he should not seize the best chance of enjoyment, he is apt to follow the largest crowd. He goes to Niagara, to Cape May, the Adirondacks, or to some one of the countless resort mansions or hot farm-houses in the suburbs of the cities. He tells you that his object is rest and freedom, but the chances are that he leaves both behind in his house in town. There he could wear his old slippers, he chose his own companions; he held such habits and opinions as suited him; he was the Macdonald, and where he sat was the head of the table. But in every one of these summer houses society tramples him down. It is often a little clique of which he never heard before, "without father, mother or descent." He may laugh at it as vulgar and ignorant, but it is master of the position; he is not. In the hottest months of the year when even the beasts in the fields lie down to rest, it forces upon him a hurly-burly of fashion, gossip, dress, and amusements, and he is obliged to manage to shut outside of his own door. He goes back, as a rule, to his shop or office, his gas-pipes and family table, unrefreshed and glad that the holiday is over. But, after all, he goes with the crowd next year. The average American is afraid not to move with the crowd.

The history of all summering-places is alike. An adventurous artist usually ventures into a new field and whispers his discovery to his friends. Scenery is well-known as popular a hobby just now as household decoration. After him come pell-mell the more esthetes, and later the mere fashionables, as the flock follows the fickle of the bell-weather and up goes the mammoth hotels as fast as mushrooms spring on a May morning on betramped sheep-walks.—Rebecca Harding Davis, in Harper's Magazine.

Four Rich Men.

The Liverpool Courier gives some rather interesting particulars as to the four men who are supposed to be the most wealthy living. Of these the poorest is his Grace the Duke of Westminster, whose income is set down at £800,000 a year. Taking it at that sum, the amount which the Duke can spend while out entertaining on his capital is £2,000 a day, £900 an hour and £110s. a minute. The next man in the ascending scale is Senator Jones, of Nevada, whose income is valued at exactly one million sterling, giving him the right to spend, if he likes, £2 a minute out of revenue. The head of the Rothschild family comes next, with a yearly income of two millions and the expenses which he can defray thereout are, of course, double as great as those of the Senator. At the top of the list comes Mr. J. W. Mackay, with a revenue of £2,750,000, which enables him to disburse £7,000 a day, £300 an hour and £5 a minute. The fortunes of the other three are insignificant if compared with this gentleman's wealth. For they were the growth of many years either of successful toil or lucky speculation, or both combined. But Mr. Mackay, as the Courier remarks was thirty years ago a penniless boy in Ireland. "Sixteen years ago he was bankrupt; and now he is the owner of the richest silver mine that has ever been discovered. There is, therefore, hope for all the penniless boys in 'old Ireland.' We commend to them the example of Mr. J. W. Mackay, who, it appears, is now only forty-five years old and if he goes on at the same rate as during the last sixteen years, will have ample time to treble his fortune and possess an income ten times as large as that of the Duke of Westminster. Already the capitalized value of property is set down at £55,000,000, against the modest £16,000,000 of the Duke. Such figures are pleasing to the eye and ear, but we regret to add that the Liverpool Courier does not by any means vouch for the accuracy of the totals it publishes.—London Globe.

—Miss Mary Clarke Anderson, who it is claimed, was a direct descendant of Oliver Cromwell, died at Salem, Mass., a few days since, aged ninety-eight years.

—Mr. Thomas Maguire, LL.D., has been elected a fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. Mr. Maguire is the first Roman Catholic fellow of the college.

For Young Readers.

LITTLE TOMMY SMITH.

Dimple-checked and rosy-lipped,
With his cap rim backward tipped,
In his fancy I can see
Little Tommy smile on me—
Little Tommy Smith.
Little unsung Tommy Smith—
Scarcely a name to rhyme it with;
Yet none so eagerly to me
Something sings unceasingly—
Little Tommy Smith.
On the verge of some far land
Still forever does he stand,
With his cap rim rakishly
Tilted; so he smiles on me—
Little Tommy Smith.
Oh, my jaunty statuette
Of first love, I see you yet;
Though you smile so mistily,
It is but through tears I see
Little Tommy Smith.
But with crown tipped back behind,
And the hand of the wind
Smoothing back your hair, I see
Heaven's best angel smile on me—
Little Tommy Smith.
—James W. Riley, in N. Y. Sun.

QUEER LITTLE SEXTONS.

There are not many of us who feel inclined to seek the society of sextons. We have an unaccountable fondness for viewing their somber dooms, or investigating their methods of procedure. As a race, we cherish no love for sextons, but rather avoid them as uncanny beings, whose services we shall never seek in our own behalf, but know full well that some day, sooner or later, our friends will seek them for us. We do not like the idea. The deep, dark holes he digs, in the pursuance of his somber trade, are not inviting in appearance, and so we shrink from the grave-digger and his associations.

All this is very true as applied to the human sexton, but away down in the lower scale of creation, among God's humbler creatures, there dwells a family of sextons whose movements are full of interest; whose company is sought, not avoided, by the lover of Nature; whose grave-digging proceedings are observed with strong interest, instead of being avoided with an irrepressible shudder. In this family, of which there are several branches or tribes, the members are all sextons. The office is hereditary, descending alike from father to son, from mother to daughter. To dig graves, to bury corpses, is the one business of their lives, and a very engrossing occupation they apparently find it. They boast a big-sounding name. We might call it a national name, for it embraces all the several tribes, *Necrophage*, or, if you are inclined to treat them with a familiarity that savors of disrespect, you may call them—as most people do—Grave-digger Beetles. They have their own family name, distinct from those of the general tribe, and these, too, have an aristocratic flavor of their own, such as *Hister cadaverinus*, *Necrophorus vespicator*, *Silpha opaca*, and several others equally impressive.

Each family has a uniform of its own. Some are arrayed in shining brown coats, others in rusty-black, others have bright-orange bars crossing their broad backs, while one pigmy family boasts of a coat smooth, and shiny, and black as the finest jet. And to this queer little nation of sextons we, the proud race of humanity, owe much, though few of us recognize the debt.

We have often heard the query: "How is it that, in walking in the woods, we never come upon the dead bodies of birds or small animals?" We know that many of them must die from natural causes in the depths of their native forests, yet their bodies are never seen. Why? Because the Creator, ever thoughtful for His creatures, in small as in great things, has ordered the little race of sexton-beetles to seek out and bury these dead bodies, that else would pollute the air and fill it with poisonous miasma; and faithfully do the little workers perform their task, not only preserving the air in all its purity, but actually adding to the fertility of the soil by covering up in its bosom the elements of decay, which go so far in nourishing vegetation.

And thus, in two direct ways, each of them of the utmost importance, do the insect sextons serve mankind. But God, ever-mindful of His least creatures, has ordained that in working for others they shall also serve themselves. The first they do, all unconscious of their service; the second they do with full intent and knowledge.

It is the business of their lives to bury dead animals. Why? They would tell you, if they could speak: "Because they furnish the proper substance on which to deposit the eggs from which spring our race. The decaying flesh first aids, by its heat, to hatch the eggs, and afterward feeds the larvae." And most wonderfully does the food thus provided for the family of little ones seem to agree with them, for once they emerge from the yellow tube in which they envelope themselves, the small, flatish, black creatures dart hither and thither with most wonderful speed, without any apparent object but that of getting rid of some of their superabundant activity.

We had often desired to see these queer little sextons at work, but never succeeded until very recently. Not many days ago, however, a mole, which had been making sad havoc among the roots of some young orange trees, was finally shot, and as we had observed several beetles close by, we resolved to put surmise as to their being "sextons" to the test. So we cast the dead mole, with studied carelessness, upon the ground, beneath the broad leaves of a banana. We were not very hopeful of the result, for the sextons love best to pursue their trade in the dead of night, and unless greatly in want of a depository for their eggs, they seldom work by day. But evidently our particular friends were pressed, for in a few moments two orange-barked beetles came flying, with widespread wings, and alighted on the lower leaf of the banana. An instant or two of investigation, and then, apparently satisfied that the corpse was *bona fide*, down they swooped upon it, and tucking their broad wings carefully out of sight, promenade awhile up and down, over and around the body, as though on a tour of inspection. At length they set about their work in earnest. Now consider a moment—that mole was at least fifty times as large as the sextons who were about to dig it a hole, so you will perceive that to dig a mole, and then drag the mole to it was an impossible task for you or me to drag an elephant. In fact, these

queer little sextons are so much smaller than any of the animals whose graves they prepare that it is out of the question for them to move the corpse in the very least. And they know this perfectly well. So, being unable to bring the corpse to the grave, they bring the grave to the corpse.

Our two sextons, having sufficiently surveyed their prize, suddenly disappeared beneath it. Very soon, a little heap of sand began to appear to one side, and then, bending cautiously, we could see the tiny grave-diggers' mode of procedure. They were working, side by side, their heads bent, their slender black legs vigorously scraping, pushing and kicking; their shoulders, or collars, which were much broader than their heads, serving the while as a brace or support. Gradually the mole sank into the grave that was being dug beneath it; but our sextons must have been new to their work—they were not experts—and so they suddenly discovered that one end of the corpse was sinking much lower than the other, instead of being, as was proper, on a level. This seemed to puzzle them sadly. They stopped digging, and, mounting the body, laid their heads together, as if in consultation over the dire catastrophe; but directly they set to work again, and proved themselves to be possessed of enough intelligence to remedy the fault; for this time they commenced at once to deepen the shallower part of the grave, and the mole was fast settling down into a more level position, when darkness made us desert our post of observation.

Our little friends had been hard at work for three hours, and the mole was scarcely more than one-fourth buried. But in the morning (as we felt sure would be the case), the mole had disappeared, and on scraping away the soil we found it carefully covered, three or four inches below the surface, and leading out from beneath it was a little round hole, where Lady Necrophorus had come up, after laying her eggs upon the tit-bit so laboriously provided for her coming progeny.

A famous entomologist, M. Gleiditsch, tells us some strange things about these same curious insect sextons, he having made them a special study and subject of experiments. Once he half-filled a glass vessel with moist earth, and placed four sextons within it; then he laid a dead linnet on the surface of the soil. The insects, so far from showing alarm at their captivity, appeared to have but one idea in life, that of burying the linnet as quickly as possible. M. Gleiditsch had observed that one of the beetles was smaller than the others (he supposed it to be a female), and now, after two hours of hard work, there was a sudden pause, and the three larger beetles united to drive away the smaller one. Why did they do this? Surely they had some reason for such unanimous action? Was the outcast beetle not working skillfully, or was it working beyond its strength? Was it driven away in friendship or enmity? Who shall say? At all events, the three resumed their occupation, and though the smaller one strove several times to come back, it was not allowed to do so, so it finally kept at a distance and watched the others as they worked steadily on. But at last even their more sturdy strength began to give out, despite their evident resolve to bury that linnet without loss of time. Just one little black sexton rested from his labors, then another, but the third beetle kept on and on and on, till M. Gleiditsch noted, with astonishment, that no less than five hours had passed since its last fellow-worker had given out; but at last, it too, sank down exhausted. After a very short rest, however, it roused itself, and, with a wonderful effort of strength, actually lifted the linnet on its back, and settled it down into the grave. The other beetles, recovering, went to work again, but it took them three days to hollow out the grave beneath the linnet, and cover it out of sight.

But M. Gleiditsch gave them plenty more work to do, desiring to test their burial capacities, and thus, in fifty days, these four busy sextons (for after a time the fourth was allowed to resume work) proceeded to dig graves for three birds, two grasshoppers, four frogs, two fish, two large pieces of meat, and the entrails of a large fish.


Another of these little grave-diggers was so strong, and so persevering, that it succeeded, by its own single exertions, in burying a mole in two days, and we have seen, the mole being fifty times as large as the beetle, it cost that little sexton just as much labor as it would cost a man to bury an object fifty times his own size—no light undertaking.

But sometimes these queer little sextons encounter a corpse that is too much for them. For instance, we are told of a sheep that was skinned and thrown where the beetles "most did congregate." The result was that anticipated by the naturalist who thus prepared the bait. The body swarmed with hungry beetles, but all their efforts were of no avail. The united exertions of hundreds of *Necrophores* were only able to sink it one-fourth below the surface of the ground, and then they left it in despair, but not before their captives—a second Tantalus—had captured specimens of every species existing in England, which was the scene of the experiment.

And now a word in closing regarding the method of grave-digging practiced by the sexton-beetle. Is it not wonderfully like the plan adopted by man in sinking wells in sandy soils? The insect digs away the ground from beneath the body, and the latter sinks lower and lower. The man builds a circular wall of stone or brick, and digs away the sand from beneath it, so that it sinks to a lower level. Then a more wall is built, and again the sand is scraped away, and the tube thus sunk becomes the lining of the well. Man, out of his experience and intelligence, has invented this method of sinking large objects in the ground, but who taught the humble little beetle the same principle, the same method of sinking a weight too great for it to move in any other way? Man thought it out, and it took him a long time to do it, too, but surely it was God who taught the humble insect sexton how best to pursue the calling He had selected for it! It is only one among myriads of proofs that lie all around us of our Father's infinite care and love for the very least of His creatures.—Helen Harcourt, in Golden Days.

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